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## STAFF NOTES:

# Soviet Union Eastern Europe

State Department review completed

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## **SOVIET UNION - EASTERN EUROPE**

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Trouble Along the Sino-Soviet Border?

Included in Moscow's latest rhetorical thrust at Peking--a long and unrelentingly hostile editorial article in *Pravda* on February 22--is the charge that China is "systematically organizing provocations, including border provocations, against neighboring socialist states." This is only the latest in a series of signs going back to late last year suggesting that Moscow suspects that China may intend to provoke a significant border incident.

We note the following:

- In the December issue of a Soviet journal, Mongolian leader Tsedenbal claimed that small groups of Chinese soldiers had, at unspecified times, crossed into Mongolian territory.
- In late January, a Leningrad public lecturer charged that Peking had engaged in "hooligan" actions along the border.
- In late January, Soviet party secretary Ponomarev accused Peking of sustaining tension along the border.

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Sentence Suspended in Maramzin Case

Although the suspended sentence handed down in Leningrad late last week in the trial of V. R. Maramzin has raised questions in the minds of his peers as to the extent of his cooperation, it has also apparently encouraged unofficial writers to continue pressing the Writers Union to publish their works.

Maramzin was arrested last July and charged with violating Article 70 of the RSFSR Criminal Code (anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda, propagating anti-Soviet literature abroad and defaming the Soviet state). In reporting the background of the case the Soviet press alleged that Maramzin, his head turned by small literary success, became "intoxicated" with anti-Soviet literature and recommended it to friends in Leningrad and Moscow. He then allegedly began to write anti-Soviet literature which was sent abroad and used by various radio stations and unnamed foreign agencies to "smear" the USSR and its peace program. The foreigners who aided Maramzin, according to *Leningradskaya Pravda*, hoped to make him into a literary and political martyr and a focal point for criticism of the USSR.

During the trial, the Soviet press reported that Maramzin, seeing the error of his ways, pleaded guilty to all charges, "actively cooperated in averting the harmful consequences of his crimes." He threw himself on the mercy of the court, which imposed only a suspended sentence. This unusual and unexpected leniency has led to speculation about the extent of the writer's cooperation and how many others he implicated.

The emphasis of the charges and press coverage on the international aspect of the case--cooperation with anti-Soviet, anti-detente forces rather than writing unorthodox works--has not been lost on local unofficial writers. Shortly after the trial, one unofficial writer told an officer at the US consulate

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in Leningrad that plans to present an ultimatum to the Writers Union for publication of some of their works are continuing. The Leningrad writers are apparently following the tactics of unorthodox painters who have recently exhibited some of their works with approval of local officials.

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Soviet Press Pays Tribute to Victim  
of 1948 "Leningrad Affair"

Articles in *Leningradskaya Pravda* on February 19 and in the central *Pravda* on February 20 marked the 70th anniversary of the birth of A. A. Kuznetsov--a major party figure during the blockade-era, Zhdanov's successor as Leningrad party leader, and the leading actor, along with N. A. Voznesensky, in the "Leningrad Affair" in 1948-1949. Kuznetsov was posthumously rehabilitated during the Khrushchev era, and the article in the central *Pravda* ten years ago marking the 60th anniversary of his birth provided the first official notification of the date of his trial and execution. This time, the articles trace Kuznetsov's career only up to 1949; they say nothing about his removal from office at that time, his trial in September 1950, or his subsequent execution before a firing squad. The two articles, no doubt unintentionally, focus attention on what is likely to be somewhat of a problem for the Soviet authorities as they continue with the build-up for the 30th anniversary of the "victory over Fascism"--the number of victors who soon became victims, especially in Leningrad but also in the Ukraine.

This year's essay in *Leningradskaya Pravda* notes that Kuznetsov became a member of the Leninist party "at age twenty...and throughout his whole life took to his heart devotion to its ideas, goals, and affairs." Reviewing his achievements in food distribution and defense organization at besieged Leningrad, his wartime colleague D. V. Pavlov recalls that Kuznetsov accomplished things that were "in unbelievable times, unforgettable." The home-town paper goes on to quote Marshal Zhukov's memories of the wartime Leningrad team--Zhdanov, Kuznetsov, Shtykov and Solovyev--and includes, for the unenlightened, a notation that "these comrades are no longer among the living." After tracing Kuznetsov's career up to

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the heights achieved during 1946-1949, when he served as a CPSU Secretary and as a member of the then-existing Orgburo of the CPSU Central Committee, the article abruptly ends--as did Kuznetsov.

The treatment in the central *Pravda* is more reserved, portraying a tougher specimen of man and printing a picture that shows a fatter, older, and less soulful-looking Kuznetsov than is found in *Leningradskaya Pravda*. The essay in the central *Pravda*, which is directly tied to the coming 30th anniversary of the Soviet victory over Germany, cites former chief of state Kalinin, rather than Zhukov, and omits any reference to Kuznetsov's membership in the Orgburo. Only the past tense of its verbs conveys to the reader that Kuznetsov is not on pension somewhere. The differences in content and in tone between the two articles in this year's newspapers point up the local pride that characterizes Leningrad and that is constantly interacting with fear of the power wielded in the capital.

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Austro-Hungarian Relations Good

The three-day visit of Austrian Foreign Minister Bielka to Hungary on February 23-26 has further bolstered the already good relations between Budapest and Vienna.

The two sides signed a consular agreement, an extradition treaty, a legal aid accord, and an agreement lifting certain visa fees. The extradition treaty reportedly is the first such accord Hungary has concluded with a Western state since 1945.

All the agreements will facilitate contacts between the two countries, but Vienna has been touting the visa accord as the most significant. The agreement abolishes visa fees for official travel serving scientific, economic, cultural, and sports purposes. For its part, Budapest can cite the accord as evidence of its commitment to freer movement.

Substantive talks apparently focused on European security, and the final communique said there is a "realistic possibility" for a rapid conclusion of the second stage followed by a third stage at the summit level.

During a session with Premier Fock, Bielka renewed an invitation for Fock to visit Vienna. An Austrian statement implied that the trip had been tentatively scheduled for June. The two sides agreed to work out cultural and public health agreements and to study ways to facilitate local cross-border traffic. The two neighbors also appear to be trying to solve some nagging economic problems. The Hungarian finance minister was in Vienna talking with Chancellor Kreisky at the time Bielka was in Budapest.

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Soviets Push New Amortization Rate for Computers

An article in the December 1974 issue of *Vestnik Statistiki* strongly urges the adoption of a new amortization rate of 10 percent for Soviet computers. The author argues that the current rate of 2 percent, which implies an active service of 50 years, has discouraged replacement of obsolete computer equipment.

The author proposes more intensive utilization of computers--23 hours per day--to increase productivity and spread the higher cost over a greater output. It will prove very difficult, however, for the Soviets to increase the rate of computer utilization. Currently, throughout the economy, computers are used on the average only about 8 hours per day. Most computer users do not have enough work for full-time utilization. Moreover, if computers were operated full-time, severe breakdowns of the Soviet hardware would no doubt occur.

Computers tend to become obsolete in about 10 years, and the faster amortization is intended to ensure that replacement keeps up with the pace of technological change. Faster amortization, however, would probably mean lower profits to the users. Unless Soviet plant managers and other users are permitted to recoup the increased costs through higher prices for their products, they would have little incentive to replace obsolescent computers.

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